



## Office of the Mayor

### **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Good Neighbors revitalize East Bank area street**

*Contact: Mikki Dobski, Director of Communications & Special Projects, 235-5855 or 876-1564, Fourth District Council Member Ann Puzzello, w235-5978/h234-1834, or Martha Lewis, President of the Howard Park Neighborhood Association, h232-9917/w234-7632.*

**Ann Puzzello and Martha Lewis are available for telephone or on-site interviews this week**

East of downtown, Quimby Street runs for a single block sandwiched between Michiana Brick & Building Supply at Frances Avenue and the Sunnymede neighborhood across Eddy Street. It's not the kind of high-traffic street that rises to the top of repaving lists.

But the neighbors on this eastside block – last paved in 1974 – came together through the city's Good Neighbors/Good Neighborhoods program to share in the cost of a complete road rebuild with new curbs and sidewalks.

Work began last week along Quimby Street as Street Department crews removed the old asphalt and began to reconstruct curbs and sidewalks as part of the program's 50-50 funding match between neighbors and the city. The work is expected to be done within the next two weeks.

"This kind of neighborhood pride provides the foundation for the city's Good Neighbors/Good Neighborhoods program. Together with residents, we want to build a more walkable community," said Mayor Stephen J. Luecke. "When neighbors participate in a cost-sharing program like this, the city can stretch its available resources and broaden the scope of public improvements."

Nearly 3,500 property owners have shared in \$7.2 million worth of improvements since the Good Neighbors/Good Neighborhoods program began in 1993. The program is open to all residential, commercial, institutional and residential properties in the city.

“This is an older neighborhood that is making so much improvement that their whole neighborhood really looks much better,” said Ann Puzzello, South Bend Common Council member representing the Fourth District, which includes Quimby Street.

The street had begun to deteriorate with the pavement breaking up into alligator skin-like pieces. “You couldn’t even do a street sweep because it would kick up all the pieces,” said Martha Lewis, president of the Howard Park Neighborhood Association, and one of the property owners.

Lewis and other neighbors approached the city several years ago through the Good Neighbors program. The project was originally slated for last year, but got bumped because of other emergency work.

“We finally have our turn,” Lewis said. “It just all fit together, and we’re getting it done. It’s a quaint little street. We’re a close, tight-knit community. . . like a family”

The nearly \$36,000 cost is being shared by the city and nine stakeholders who represent most of the block’s property owners. “We’re not rich or anything but we still like to live where it’s pleasant-looking,” Lewis said. “There’s a lot of pride in the neighborhood.”

The pride has gone above and beyond streets, curbs and sidewalks. In addition, individual homeowners are adding decorative light posts, re-siding houses, planting flowers and trees as well as having downspouts disconnected from the storm sewer. Lewis also is creating a small corner “park” for the block, featuring trees and landscaping.

“It’s been a positive partnership with the city,” Lewis said. “When it’s done, we hope to have a block party.”